

Appl. No: 10/659,872
Amdt. Dated June 28, 2005
Reply to Office Action of March 29, 2005

Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace paragraph [0002] with the following amended paragraph:

[0002] The present invention relates generally to [[the]] concrete building foundations, and, more particularly, to a building foundation for use with expansive soils that includes a slab and wall assembly in which the walls are supported by the slab and/or an external sump pit for which access is provided in a window well or other access point external to the foundation walls and/or includes a dam about the external, lower portion of the slab and wall assembly for maintaining a void space under the walls and the slab.

Please replace paragraph [0008] with the following amended paragraph:

[0008] Hence, there remains a need for a foundation design that accounts for expansive soil but that also provides a relatively inexpensive method for manufacturing the foundation walls and flooring slab. In such a foundation design, preferably a void is provided under the flooring slab to control stresses caused by expanding and contracting soil and even with the void the strength of the foundation walls and slab are maintained. Further, it is preferable that the foundation design be such that standard (e.g., not taller) walls may be utilized to obtain a desired floor to ceiling height.

Please replace paragraph [0009] with the following amended paragraph:

[0009] The present invention addresses the above problems by providing a foundation with slab and wall assembly in which the foundation wall is supported by the top of the slab rather than the slab being supported by the walls. This arrangement eliminates the need for [[a]] "taller" foundation walls, as was the case with prior foundation walls in foundations with underlying void spaces. Additionally, the mating of the slab and the wall is relatively airtight, which reduces the chances of mold or other toxins passing into the interior spaces of the foundation. In some embodiments of the foundation, a sump pit is provided outside the building envelope by positioning the sump pit external to the foundation walls. In one embodiment, the sump pit is located at the bottom of a

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window well to provide ready access to the sump pit and any contained sump pump. The slab and wall assembly is raised above the bottom of the window well such that the void space beneath the foundation can be accessed from the window well.

Please replace paragraph [0017] with the following amended paragraph:

[0017] More particularly, the foundation of Figure 1 includes a slab and wall assembly that differs from conventional slab and wall arrangements in that the slab is used to support the wall rather than the wall supporting the slab. As shown, the foundation 100 includes a slab 110 with an adjoined or monolithic end beam 116. ~~The slab 110 and column 116.~~ The end beam (or wall-support beam) 116 is supported on piers 114 that, although not shown, are typically spaced apart piers that are separately formed of poured concrete and extend into the ground 126 a distance. The number, shape and size of the piers 114 may vary to practice the invention but are used to support the end beams 116 as the columns are hardening and after the placement of the walls 118. Bars 117 are optionally provided for additional strength in the end beams 116. The end beams 116 are typically rectangular but a square or other shaped beam and/or column may be utilized. Generally, the end beams 116 have a width that is substantially equivalent to the thickness of the foundation walls 118 but smaller or greater widths may be utilized in some cases. Further, although not shown, some embodiments of the foundation 100 may omit the end beams 116 with structural support for the walls 118 being provided by the slab 110 that in turn is supported by the piers 114. The piers 114 in some cases may be replaced by pads and/or other known support elements.